

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SSO-00
NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /076 W
-----089721 281505Z /53

O R 281318Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1733
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USNMR SHAPE
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST
USDOCOSOUTH
EUCOM
AMCONSUL ADNAN
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 3321

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, TU, UR
SUBJ: VISIT TO TURKEY OF CHIEF OF SOVIET GENERAL STAFF

1. CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE SOVIET UNION, MARSHAL
NIKOLAI OGARKOV, ARRIVED IN ANKARA APRIL 25 FOR A FOUR-DAY
VISIT AS GUEST OF THE CHIEF OF TURKISH GENERAL STAFF GEN KENAN
EVERN. OGARKOV SPENT HIS FIRST TWO DAYS IN ANKARA CALLING
ON SENIOR TURKISH MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS,
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INCLUDING MINDEFENSE ISIK AND PRIMINECEVIT. LATER, HE
TOURED OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND VISITED A FEW MILITARY
INSTALLATIONS IN ANKARA AND ISTANBLU. HE RETURNED TO ANKARA APRIL
28 TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT KORUTURK.

2. PRESS COVERAGE OF THE OGARKOV VISIT HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE
AND HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE FACT THAT VISIT COINCIDES WITH THE

PERIOD WHEN TURKEY IS REVIEWING ITS SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WEST. SENSATIONALIST GUNAYDIN, IN PARTICULAR, CARRIED ARTICLES TWO DAYS IN A ROW ALLEGING THAT US IS HIGHLY DISTURBED BY OGARKOV'S VISIT. ONLY MAOIST AYDINLIK SEEMED TO NOTE THE INCONGRUITY OF THE NEARLY SIMULTANEOUS ARRIVAL IN ANKARA OF OGARKOV AND ROMANIAN PRIMIN MANESCU.

3. IN HIS PUBLIC UTTERANCES, OGARKOV HAS STRESSED THE THEME OF TURKISH/SOVIET FRIENDSHIP. HIS MOST INTERESTING PUBLIC STATEMENT WAS MADE DURING A MEETING THAT HE AND ECEVIT HAD WITH THE PRESS JUST PRIOR TO THEIR PRIVATE CONVERSATION. ECEVIT MADE A VERY CAREFULLY DRAFTED STATEMENT CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDLY COOPERATION BETWEEN NEIGHBORING STATES. HE SAID THAT THIS ASPECT OF TURKISH POLICY DID NOT CHANGE FROM GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT. HE INDICATED THAT HIS VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION IN JUNE WOULD CONTRIBUTE FURTHER TO FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORS. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING. "THE TURKISH NATION WANTS TO LIVE IN PEACE....I BELIEVE THE PEOPLE OF THE SOVIET UNION TRULY DESIRE PEACE."

4. IN RESPONSE OGARKOV WENT FARTHER. HE SAID THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS PLEASED BY RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT IT WAS DETERMINED TO BRING ABOUT FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS. GARKOV CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT WHEN HE SPEAKS

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OF IMPROVING RELATIONS, HE MEANS RELATIONS IN SEVERAL FIELDS. "WE ALSO INCLUDE OUR MILITARY RELATIONS IN THIS CONTEXT."

5. SEVERAL NEWSPAPER COMMENTATORS HAVE CHOSEN TO INTERPRET OGARKOV'S ALLUSION TO IMPROVING MILITARY RELATIONS AS A GUARDED OFFER OF WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST IN SUPPLYING MILITARY EQUIPMENT. THIS THEME IS COMPLEMENTARY TO THE THEME THAT BY INVITING OGARKOV AT THIS TIME, THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT IS ENGAGING IN A NOT-SO-SUBTLE ATTEMPT TO BLACKMAIL THE US AND THE WEST. MOST COMMENTATORS SET UP THE BLACKMAIL THEORY AS A STRAW MAN AND THEN DEMOLISH IT, POINTING OUT THAT IN THESE DANGEROUS TIMES TURKEY HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO EXAMINE ITS ALTERNATIVES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ANKARA 3321

6. APPARENTLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF OGARKOV'S
REMARK ON MILITARY COOPERATION, DEFMINISTER ISIK WAS QUOTED
BY THE PRESS AS SAYING THAT THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION DURING
CONVERSATION WITH OGARKOV OF POSSIBILITY OF ARMS PURCHASES
OR COOPERATION IN THE MILITARY FIELD. HE POINTED OUT THAT
THE FACT THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE DIFFERENT DEFENSE SYSTEMS
PRECLUDED SUCH COOPERATION. (IN CONTRAST GUNAYDIN APRIL 28
CLAIMS OGARKOV OFFERED TO BUILD A FACTORY IN TURKEY TO MANU-
FACTURE SPARE PARTS FOR US-PROVIDED EQUIPMENT.)
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7. TURKISH PRESS APRIL 28 ALSO REPORTS THAT GREEK CYPRIOT
GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN UPSET BY OGARGOV'S MENTION OF EXPANDED
RELATIONS IN THE MILITARY FIELD AND HAS PROTESTED THE STATEMENT
TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN NICOSIA.

8. COMMENT: DESPITE SPECULATION TO THE CONTRARY, THE

OGARKOV VISIT DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO CARRY ANY MAJOR POLITICAL MESSAGE. OGARKOV IS THE MOST SENIOR SOVIET MILITARY OFFICIAL TO HAVE VISITED TURKEY IN 45 YEARS. NEVERTHELESS, THE GENESIS OF HIS VISIT WAS AN INVITATION FROM GEN EVREN DURING THE LATTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IN MAY, 1976 WHEN HE WAS DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE TURKISH GENERAL STAFF. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE POTENTIAL FOR THE SOVIETS TO CAPITALIZE ON THE WEST, WE BELIEVE THAT THE TURKS WILL, AT LEAST UNTIL THE QUESTION OF THE EMBARGO IS RESOLVED, BE VERY CAREFUL TO RESIST ANY INDICATION OF AN EXPANDED TURKISH-SOVIET MILITARY RELATIONSHIP. (WE DO NOT DISCOUNT, HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE GÖT IS HOPING THAT THE US AND WESTERN EUROPE WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED BY THE OGARKOV VISIT TO BE A BIT MORE ATTENTIVE TO TURKISH INTERESTS.) WE HOPE TO HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS TO DISCUSS THE OGARKOV VISIT WITH OUR CONTACTS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. HOWEVER, THE OFFICERS INVOLVED IN HIS VISIT ARE TOTALLY TIED UP IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE MANESCU VISIT AND ECEVIT'S VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA TWO WEEKS AGO, AND IN THE PREPARATIONS FOR ECEVIT'S VISIT TO BULGARIA NEXT WEEK AND HIS JUNE VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION. WE MAY THEREFORE HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING DETAILED INFORMATION SOON.

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